

the arrangement

</body>

BRAT

Grease travels halfway down, she picks flakes from the root. The girl sits on the closed toilet with her head tilted to the side. Uneven strands pulled taut into the iron against her scalp by her mother. The walls are beige enough to be anywhere.

He hangs around the doorway.

Always makes me think of the movie where the girl gets killed by the hot curling iron shoved inside her vagina. Did we watch that with her?

Muddled blues on the eyelid. Half her head in ringlets. Pale sweating skin, baby pink cheeks, bright red lips like the smallest matryoshka doll.

Hold still.

Faint fry of oiled hair on metal.
Shifting arms to sides. Her little face contorts.

I told you to hold still.

The girl whimpers, pushing on her mother's stomach with her palms.

You are hurting me. You are out of control. I can't deal with you. If you can't fucking sit for two minutes you can do it yourself.

Mother walks out and slams the door hard enough to vibrate the foundation.

She presses the iron against the
side of her chin and waits.

The car is cold. It smells of white bags filled with old
hash browns, permeated by sickness. Lights blend
together in the unfocused visual hum of an iPad
flashing primary colors in repetitive haze.

She thinks of nothing.

Oiled face, small stains on long sleeve v-neck.
Extended stomach above low rise bell-bottoms,
peeking with movement. Hidden in her hand: a
small bobby pin with the rounded ends chewed off.

She cradles the sharp edge against
the center of her palm.

*Don't you want to go to heaven like Mommy and
Daddy?*

The outside feels like walking in bare skin. People
look at her. She can tell by the sound of her
mother's footsteps, breaking in rhythm
to follow eyelines.

*It's not you. They stare at everyone here.
There's no difference between a pretty girl
and an ugly one.*

White fluorescent tile and cheap disinfectant, legs
swing from the single anachronistic wooden chair in
the renovated waiting room. Remaining fasteners
for a CRT that isn't there anymore. She plays a

themed puzzle game on her tablet, eyeless. Heated
tension in chest without WiFi.

They visit the corporate office on the third floor of
Neiman Marcus at Broadway Square twice per
week. Her mother speaks to her friend, another
woman with her daughter. Too young to talk to.

I don't get why he only does it on my stomach and
never inside me.

Mind frames a match cut.

have to go to the bathroom

*You just went five minutes ago. Laurel will be out
soon, wait until it's over.*

The mother turns back to her conversation. She
tugs on her mother's shirt with her mouth, soaked
cotton clenched between teeth.

have to go NOW

Can't you just be patient for once?

Now now now now now

It ends the same. Hands gripped to ankles, burn of
skin and bone grinding into laminate. Hair tangles,
drags below back. Laurel and Mother above like a
cop's light. Shields eyes with arms.
Screams. Tears.

Center: *stand even, hands on hips.*
Forward: *right foot ahead, arms behind back.*
Left: *left foot extended, arms crossed.*
Right: *right foot extended, arm on left hip.*
Back: *crossed legs, arms at sides.*

Swollen cheeks in the meeting room. Five steps in gaff tape on the floor. The motions are the same, akin to ballet positions in memorization but not as fundamental. It's about repetition.

She wears a yellow floral dress. Tags hidden in crevices, standing in front of a grey backdrop. The mother sits outside of the frame, beside Laurel.

I don't like the way the children look in these. You understand the meaning. You're photographing pigeons, not the deep focus. Staged out of proportion. I wish I knew enough to tell you everything you need to know.

I'll try to take a better set this time.

The Photographer crouches under light buzz, borrowed from the portrait studio floors below. Setup identical, inch by inch. Steps tracked, Laurel yells instruction. Target wide through scope.

The girl is still. He matches eyes.
Wide, white. Overexposed.
Tears fall.

have to go

He takes the shot.

*We have a few minutes left,
is someone able to take her real quick?*

Legs rise, hard slow stride. The Mother laughs like
a joke.

She slaps her little stupid face.

*You're making a fucking scene in front of everyone,
stop embarrassing us.*

drip down leg

She floats outside the room
and The Photographer shadows.

Single stall. fake wooden floor,
Indented metal drain.

Even level legs contract around.

He shows his phone

red

blue

yellow

clipped frequencies

breathing slows

hand on hair,

blue rag from coat

he unfolds an ice cube

fits in her mouth. fingers warm, salted

presses wet thumb against tender
yellow concealer crusted
iron print cloth to face

*life is never kind to small and needy.
your mind is just like mine.*

*you're normal.
an average mewling mouth.
they don't know that they love you.
not yet.*

*come to my arms,
i'll make you special
together, sleep into
the white and sightless*

sanctified

angled concrete leads to basement
dented white squares, wooden stage
folded tables bound in closet. he drags chairs
the organist remembers his death here.

stomach contracts, smells birth on immaculate
hands.
hand touches the floor to trace the boundary line

white wall, cut-out square in dust thick blinds
father cradles the body in touch below
corporeal degenerates, as all men do
you are forever within yourself

he bangs his head against the wall until it cracks.

the organist tends to the kitchen in the annex
father in chair, the boy beside him
i'd like for you to see this

whiteness unrecognizable. hand stare
how strange it is to extend fingers beyond
this skeletal frame. he breaks an egg on the stove.

smoke alarm flashes, it burns
screened through countertop reflection

lead in guideless, grasp for form
plastic tarp taped to tops of chairs
the party game. they speak separate lines
did you witness inappropriate behavior?

tacoma curves the corner. pulls into lot
greedy. locks black gate under darkness
thinned hair button down moves with wind
children must take love while it's given.

fingers at keys, father behind him.

stabat mater dolorosa
rehearsed motion,
child partaking the
pain of the mother

it was such a sad sound
your hands each day
from the crying room

as i formed bruised,
tender beheld.
my favorite.

been four weeks since my last confession
familiar sound of breath recursive
echo wound

right hands meet the divider between them
in puddle on the floor

you are forgiven

actress

she comes with a close up smell
familiar refraction of burning animal fat
appears on walls, faded yellow-green

*your eyelashes are so beautiful
women love you. when you're older*

the angle lowers itself. cut-out of
an acid curve, dissolves the skin

*from before hollywood immemorial:
men are only drawn to continue
themselves beyond*

when the cars drive by the body knows
exactly where it stands.

time's arrow has punctured your heart
and i will pull it out.

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE FAIR

they bring the younger one named brittany,
who isn't afraid to try new thrills.
on the railing he presses hips on hips,
arm around the shoulder
mother frames you in death,
i've felt my full life beating your chest

*how wonderful it is to be lifted from the soil again -
look below. aren't you glad i'm not tied by hand,
pulled from the rocks at the bottom of the stand?*

lined at the back of a laugh. the rabbit in
the carrier rests on victoria's stomach.
it's nothing special, bodies writhe.
give it up while you're still wanted.
the center of the wheel spins and she stares into it.

You remember:

You are what you say you are.

You remember:

I am a black wall.
I am a girl, no older than five.
I'm in the air, and I'm upside down.
I'm upside down, and I'm turning around,
and around, and around.

his hands scale smaller on adolescent
flip flops between dirt, open blood blisters rubbed

dry on heels. the blonde one reaches for polyester
ears, fingers trace swirls

You remember:

*I am sitting in the living room during the class,
Cole bashed in with the tennis racquet in the
garage until he drips on the concrete,
counting seconds until sound disappears like
thunder.*

You remember:

*I am sitting in the living room, stomach strike to my
little extended belly.
Hit. Again, and again, and again.*

*the extent of her struggles and discoveries surpass
that of the average teen*

the man shoves his elbow beside the rabbit on
chest as he turns. anti-rollback clicks with internal
beating. only two people know this motion.

girls stare into each other
unformed fingers meet between rails

i remember:

*a series of curves, pinned to the surface by outline
he pulls from wreckage and slips inside the cavity
upside down, turning around, and around
enveloped every crevice spills life
he closes eyes*

every movement he makes, i make

THE GAP

drawing dandelions in dull point, tethered in
alternate rows shrinking until they disappear
twin bed beside parents, pushing the body in the
crack until it sinks into the floor.
the closet beside it in the mirror wall, small legs
folded between suitcases in numb spasms

there has never been anything else. you were loved
when small, and became a choice. sit there on the
couch with legs spread, hand on stomach and say
nothing. hair yanked as steps fall down thinking
about the wife in the ceiling.
it's an affair. this is the role.

exlover stench sprayed on red tank, chosen. flesh
torn, touched later. this one breathes
and he makes the connection.

office papers, lesson plans strewn below feet
creviced in shopping bags. on the floor, blue pencil
reads: *write something good or you'll be
questioned.*

pictured:
self in corners, underneath. the knife slides in
repeat, hands ring the neck

doors open to the loved one, raises arms. they see

the vision of the real self and consume it from the
inside out. static hands pressed under stomach
make it easy to cradle again.

mattress in the corner of the dining hall the smell of
alcohol every morning the fridge opens, rotting
television audial blur, only able to see blue and red
reflection on mottled tile where people sleep
the wall fades to black and he comes again

baggy, dirt covered pajama pants unbrushed hair
where is it?

hands shake wide eyes hold rabbit

where are you going to get it?

motionless breathing from mouth

if you don't have it,

your body will stop on the inside.

fingers framed around wide eyes petting soft
strands

it's time for you to end now.

removes jeans walks into locker room legs crossed
around drain, opens mouth wide and breathes in.
arms outside boundaries, chest curled in face
against. bodies writhe against in pool hands touch
bubbled swim shorts spill out pressed to jet.
shoulders pushed below level, legs kick until they
don't. just as imagined when they bathe alone.

there is nothing special about pain.

*there is nothing unique about another pathetic
excuse for a fuck getting turned
to nothing but a story.*

faces change, this is the only thing that is ever
needed to hear.

concrete cements this
bristles between the crack grow and blow away
the lead runs out

PRESSURE AND RELEASE

*you cruise straight to the west
arrive at the shore and slither on the edge
your body fits perfectly
within the cracks of the rocks
flat rhythmic pulse of waves crashing into*

one foot drags in the sweep
corner below the overhang of the step
curved to press where it's felt most.

lower your eyes and you will be there.

humps the covered hole like an animal.
blank face of stunned cattle, drooling outside itself.
arm stretches to slip a coin in the slot.

hit ground in time, hand wired around jaw
takes a drag. legs sleep against the surface
fingers spread to watch semi-soft drip
down twitching puddle

linen jacket crouches down to the level
smoke palm pressed on stomach, other slips
inside.hammers white soaked greasehand
until the screams start

broken in the receiver
I can tell you were missed.

wipes angled panel between slats
placed stale within itself
fingers trace bakelite

that's because it's true love.

the circular drain of the glass
breath cycles ignore the space
tucked in chamber

you can open them

the sound of cars decides who stays
skirt pulls down, stands to dust
each frame a picture in reverse

line drawn in subtle variations of blue
everything ends in white slate

paradise is where you are now

props

lord of the rings plastic swords banded
below the katana on the wall

balsa wood pointed arrows
wrapped with green duct tape

hand on denim in the office chair taken to the floor

pulled from the office drawer to ear
molded by pressure around frame
hair pulls head under back

i wish you made me endless
i wish you made me loved

the mirror

they center the wide grey plain between the lawns.

six, seven pairs change space.
cargo pants press bare.

they move in singular step with each she takes.

fingers hook around every crack
as they drift to the ground.

twitter says it's this building.
intercom moves from windows,
it's easy to know where they're coming from.
grass to spread knees on the shift beneath.
equal level on the hill contacted with a single eye,
aware with breath on her back.

full strokes, motion splayed on gravel.
you should know it's only a spasm.
there's no difference between us.
not really.

animal planet

dinner chairs box the corner screen,
mammals extended by birth

in sound of pressed gags between timed
miles on the gazelle

her neighbor whispers under smoke:

you're the only fat friend i've ever had.

by the middle of july it spills from red sequined
white fur, mottled with sweat. her knees grind
the crack of tile. smash mouth christmas
song plays by minute.
on first count, glove crushes ribs

in the hallway, the corrector
molds the outline in flats
this is a woman's form. born to feed
she carves her arrangement

my wet hands sting the faded iron
wait for someone to smell it on me again

you were a good boy

it was pinned from the post, someone took down

scraps of letters are what stay here

you, scrubbed the same as anyone
from the curve of your hand
all you wanted was white

i was the one who watched
from the slats, i'm the one.
when it's over, i'll make the call.

women take their toll.
bleed until good as dead.

there are no answers,
no questions from me.

i replay the video and
think of your cheeks,
flushed cheeks.

no body

it was pinned from the post,
you were born from fucking, made to live inside it.
every night before sleep i imagine the gun was real
and i am far from here, overspilling.
there are eyes inside. my body falls asleep on
every stranger's couch. give me one space
where it stops beating.

he marries me when i'm seventeen, everywhere i
go i am aware of the outline of my face.
grandfather once spoke of his father's creation,
spread to be of one through town. she holds my
hand scanned full of wires. he cries in my arms
promises that he will never leave me as he left us.
i hold my mind at the end of the barrel.

they ask for examples and there are none.
maybe it could have been him, if he lived.
the answer is in that.

*it was an accident before. don't you remember
that she was once removed?*
holds my legs spread against arms, rocks with his
leg until it starts again. women say the pain comes
from being different. i'm not sure what the
difference is. it's nothing special. life, before
anything, is what happens to you.

i know what i am.

pandora

2:05 outside the wall, she pulls the tape from the pole. nausea drips from the chair where she sits.

when it's over, she'll make the call. verbal confirmation, she asks again. topics divided by act. each account displays the answer. respond with **here.**

he shares the tuscan remnants, flipped to showcase thread bare pink lace, stacked on stiff tan linen. one by one, plosives in count against blue light mirror on frame, waiting. the pool - pushing the balloon in. lifts hair against the mouth. yellow stripes between cold white, she comes to rake the leaves. it's not physically possible - learn the new tongue. was it inside you? front, or behind? digital? oral? did someone take pictures? was it someone like you? were they bigger? was there an automatic response? how many times did it happen? no one else in the world knows this feeling. no one else understands what you have **here.**

faces change and it doesn't matter. all i see is chest. the spindles wrap ankles, friction rolls back my shirt and i take the linen with me. mask cuffs my face. i lay on the bed, alert and exposed.

you'll be awake during the procedure so we can make sure it's alert and functioning when we separate. the hollow tube sucks my tongue. i feel

nothing as i watch my stomach
fill the outline with color and shape.

did you catch that game last night?
i have this, in my wallet.
rachel wouldn't return any of my calls.
do you know what they brought?

in the bedroom, the middle one: below the open
window i face against to avoid the eyes. every night
i am five years old. he curves the stomach.

no one knows the time when it will end.
there is nothing to worry for: in this kind of end is
eternity, an endless cradle.

i bang my head against the wall until he knows
this is what i'm trying to escape.

every night i am five years old, i cry, and i scream,
and i cry and no one comes for me.

time. prep for the next one, we're running late.

what happened is on its way

hands claw the trellis, where everyone meets to
grow their heads. this is where it stands:
someone said it, and someone listened. it wouldn't
mean anything if my life wasn't given to it.
when the song starts, this is no longer a memory.

**You are you again.
The clock stops in front of your eyes.
When you were in high school,
you were always tired.
You understand now.**

white canvas gurney on metal frame, i can feel the
sheet over my head. black wrought iron
fences this gift of diplomacy.

6:05, outside the studio. the actor pulls them
forward for the delivery. the card opens,
pairs of hands touch my hips.

he touches my cheek. there was no difference.
only the merge, this state exists for the lost
to mirror their essence.

i give him the words and the scene ends.

mask blast of compressed air,
flash electric rods for the shot.

Snap into place.

Raw back from the repeated carpet burn.

**The hair on his arms brush your neck,
he holds you like her.**

**Better to glue your mouth
than let the dirty words come.**

You are ordered to let it in.

i walk across the street to the overcoat,
they tell me you've been written out.

in the long run, this is nothing.
we'll return to white and back to the role again.
while i'm here, i wanted you.

oh well.

the list

the director: a bulimic wretch who refused to show
up on set until the producer changed her name to
the christian actor that mentions his super co-star
as an expletive at every opportunity. the kid only
sees her when the cola spills onto the southwestern
resort convention center carpet
from her trembling hands.

*he told me she sliced it open lengthways with a
steak knife on the island until all the yellow fat
was spilling out of her.*

in the golf course in the middle of death valley, the
kid stands under the misters in front of the lobby.
the director's father - the investor - is saying
something across the room to the producer while
the mother untangles her hair.

*i think she's been more than making up
for what was lost.*

kid hangs around in an old purple target tank,
denim capris, overspilling. taller than most. face
and shoulders blistering with a month's worth of
third degree sunburns between driving the golf cart
for b roll. the producer let her have the silver sash
from the sponsor, like the pageant -
Miss Nassau Energy 2006.

she had been sleeping in it, on the couch pullout.
it's wrinkled at the wrap party. everyone follows the
formal code left clean from their suitcases. the
mother begs her to take it off but he said *this was
meant to form a woman's body*. not enough time
passes to know this is the week it ended,
because it started.

a local DJ hosts karaoke in the middle of the hall,
lights dimmed. party city LED disco balls flash
across the room. various crew stumble to the
crowded platform, it's really nothing. she's not even
supposed to be there. the director takes off both of
her shoes, lined in neon, shaking
printed letter copies in the air.

do you know who you've been giving yourself to?

*the elective improv class at the charter, teaching
them how to make furniture of themselves, carved
by hand. trash bags taped to the backs of chairs for
tunnels. inside the walls at 4am, searching on the
carpet for the braces and the letter with the heart
through it. face pushed into the couch after she falls
asleep, lights out while the st. augustine boys pull
for an ankle. a fake gun is as deadly as a real one.
writing it out under the franchise until he got the
proper credit for his work. confirmation for those
who wait for marriage, the importance of finding the
one who looks like they can take it hard.
he made the list.*

the director locks with the kid
do you know who you've been giving yourself to?

*crowd around like vultures with the light to tear it
off, they cast you for your ability to roll. grey couch
back room of the sports bar, camera center spread
between two to get his money's worth. the files, the
drives. names written by hand, reading aloud how
you'd let them sit with yours as their own. they say
you're the reason they get off free. make the
incision and wait for it to instill. i scroll through
every frame, watching each infection fester until the
pus drains. if you have no feelings,
this is the way to kill them.*

she takes it out of her dress and exits the stage.
hanging half below the platform, dripping into her
father's hands. the producer pets the kid's hair
while her mother covers her eyes. between fingers,
electric horizontal lines the freeway, trailers leave in
the half light. water tops the jacuzzi tub in the room,
grab each handle in the mirror before slipping
inside. i push myself in, counting
face down until i can breathe.

i get what i want

I held onto the railing behind her on the train. My stomach pressed against her the entire trip, knowing she was feeling it between her shoulders. When we got out, I pretended to drop it. I brushed my elbow against her breast, and reached the corner by the time it was noticed.

She helped with what we couldn't carry. Her fingers fucked up the belt, so I did it for her. I left my hands there. It didn't leave as many marks this time. We watched television back at the house. I saw her sitting on the arm of the chair. I kept my eyes closed while I pretended to breathe, and didn't say anything as I felt the tugging in my hand. She went to bed, and I climbed through the screen.

She hid under the steel railing until I could get her to come out with what I offered. I tried to drag her out with each hand wrapped around her ankles, but I should know by now that it's trifle things that get the job done. The corner of a small blanket more than any person or animal or place or item or anything else in the entire world.

We took her in again, and they didn't question the documents or spotting. They showed her the chart, I left the room so they could ask the question. I came back in, and we left together. The night after, she tried it. Stupid fucking bitch with a few chewed

off and corroded bobby pins half-drowning in the
bathtub thinking it'll make a dent. She told her she
was just "testing" them. Swallowed in red
Old Navy sweatshirts and week-old
white fleece pajama pants.

I'm trying to remember the conversation we had in
the bathroom. The towel was wrapped around my
waist. They were wrong about the progression, I felt
the outline and saw the stain. This was my choice. I
get what I want. I'm not going to worry over
something that isn't happening.

She handed her a flower she found growing in
between the bricks in the backyard.
She still looked small.

He came for an hour visit before it closed. I saw a
printed picture of her. Moon face, white long sleeve
t-shirt with her half exposed tits covered in stretch
marks years old. Skin that an entire hand can grab.
Little fucking lipstick smile on her face, wearing a
robe, holding onto a certificate with five skinny
animals from different fathers clinging to her leg
with the same desperate eyes.

I wondered how much she would fuck them over.
Her living in a state of emergency, talking in circles
until they beg to sit alone in a room. The men in
and out, willing to take anything available to them. I
wondered if they would grab her by the neck and
shove her against the wall when she gets hysterical

about the search history on the family computer.

The little drugs they give her to get along.

What she would trade to be able to have more than the twin mattress in the corner of the dining room. If

she dilates so it doesn't hurt when he forces it inside before he goes to work in the morning. Does she cry every time, and wish she could wake up and be anyone, anywhere else. I wondered how long it would continue on with them. I wondered if when she scrubbed her hands bare doing the dishes in the afternoon, she thought of me.

The next year he came back to show me the pictures of the flowers and precious trinkets on the corner by the front yard of the apartment complex.

Metal plaque in the bench beside the cracked sidewalk with small flecks in the cement. Her small picture engraved with the words

We will always be together.

note

You'll get used to the little incidents once you start.

It's part of dealing with the public. They'll tell you how much hotter they've gotten since they were a child. We'll put you up at the welcome desk, because you're good at smiling. Even better when they're inches from your face, with their hand on your shoulder, telling you that you have the most beautiful mouth they've ever seen. You'll figure out how to wind around the floors to avoid the corners.

When The Driver comes to pick you up, you can stare at his hands, and remember. Listen to him tell you about the dress and the figure. If you're lucky, he'll bring his fingers close enough to get you to cry yourself to sleep without the privacy to make the feeling stop. If you're lucky, you'll know how to keep yourself quiet.

The closest release you could probably find is to find a stranger that you feel nothing for, and let them do what they want to you. You're lucky that you can come feeling any touch. You're lucky that any penetration is enough to make you cry. You're lucky to be able to remember how you forgot that there's nothing erotic about it. You should be grateful that you could have the feeling of holding back tears feeling unbearable agony as you watch yourself have your fifteenth orgasm, while hearing

yourself involuntarily scream about how
much you fucking love cock.

You're lucky to innately know that this is your
purpose, and every moment of the day you don't
spend getting fucking pounded by a nameless man,
with your face pressed between the frame and the
crack in the motel mattress in your little world, with
a little tv in the corner playing the same cable loop
on silent, with the little permanent bottle of lube on
the nightstand, with the little pillow you hide behind
when you get scared, with the little pictures he
takes, the little pictures he stores in the book, and
the little drugs he gives you, is a waste of the
sagging body that should have been removed
decades ago. Where did your world go?

You need to ask yourself: What are the chances
that you could hear someone talking you through it
again? What are the chances that someone could
rub you slowly again? What are the chances there
could be anyone looking for more than a waiting
room? If you're lucky, someday there will be
someone who can kiss you. If you're lucky, there is
someone who will like you. What are the
fucking chances of that?

Talk about time being done. Your same fantasy of
someone bashing your head in to let the flowers
grow through the soil. The same one of you curling
up like a dying dog under the warm skylight on your
skin in your childhood living room. The same one

with the rocks and eroding cliffs of the peninsula
where your grandparents lie. The same one where
you close your eyes and imagine having
never been anyone ever. Stupid.

You are the little girl forever.

This is what lasts.

You want love?

This is love.

Feel it.

real live girl

When you stand at the edge before they can clear
the corner. You can meet their eyes when they see
you, and they make the split decision to find a
direction. That's the good one.

I watch them pace along the outer edge of the
street to avoid the sidewalk. It's funny how they do
that. The big ones clomping with a drag across the
concrete from the injury. All of the little ones. The
ones with enough physical vitality
to look straight past.

Hold it close enough to your pockets for them to
wonder what's happening in front of them. Better if
you're hard. Better if you see them trace the
outline.

I bring it to her. The safe one. When they can't
shake the feeling like they're one in the world and
they look to you with their big wide eyes and a
clinging touch like you know a different kind of
sympathy. They're the only one who has ever felt it.
Each shake in their hands makes mental lines back
to where it came from. It's not special.
I pet her hair and hope that's enough.

I know I was inside, but I remember watching it
through the window in the office. The blinds were
drawn but if you pressed your face against the

glass you could see through the slats. There was rarely anyone there to see it anyway, and if they were there, they'd still be on the phone. Anyone can picture a man slipping an envelope across, or putting the picture of a knife in someone's head. It's more of an aging cunt making the call alone at her desk.

Do you think Brad Pitt and George Clooney are gay? Together. I mean. They just have that feeling.

I read one time that Katie Holmes found Tom Cruise having sex with the guy from Matchbox Twenty and she kept quiet. My father was part gay. That's why he only ever did it in my ass. So what do you think.

I could feel the weight of them sitting on my back before they were there. Becoming a fixture. Leaving an imprint deep enough to become one.

The twin mattress in the corner of the kitchen beside a grey storage bin and two trash bags full of costumes and street clothes. On top is a small, decades old dirty stuffed rabbit with a pink embroidered verse.

She looks smaller today. Crossed into the pillow with the previous indentation. A little open cut on her leg. I feel her contract around my finger. She's not as huggy, now that she's older. If she makes it out, she'll go to therapy for years to be able to take anything without pain but I know what won't leave her.

*when i was little i would imagine:
being in your class or in the bathroom or in a room.
someone rips my clothes off and hits me with their
fists and hurts me really deep on the floor until i
know i'm dead. you come in and notice him and tell
him to get off me. we've never made love before,
but you were someone who made me feel safe and
you always secretly really loved me. you are the
only one in the entire world who knew what my dad
did because i trusted you enough. i loved you.*

*this is the first time you've seen me naked. my body
is really hurt and there's a lot of blood, and i'm
shivering in front of you. you unbutton your pants
and force your love onto me, telling me how much
you are grateful for me and what a wonderful time it
was getting to share a life with me
for just a single moment in time.*

*i'm really scared and we cry together and you hold
me tighter and tighter, gasping in your arms until i
feel you fill me with your warm love and i die.*

I pound her cunt on the mattress, fast enough to
get myself off without involving her. I pull out and
cum on her stomach. She takes what we agreed
on.

Making the connection is enough.

scenes

This film is a warning.

We are on the patio of a quick dining restaurant in the suburban sprawl. Late afternoon. Faint red-blue projection on the walls from the LED disco ball as the DJ sets up his stand. Glass and tuscan style patio furniture covered in leaves, laminated menus slightly wet with condensation. We see an older man in his late 60s, early 70s with balding white hair. Fat, wearing a black t-shirt over his sun-damaged arms.

A sweet, young-looking poor girl with a blonde bob, wearing a tank and shorts, inappropriate for the weather. Small enough tits to get away with not wearing a bra. Histrionic look in her eye. She sits next to her mother, a desperate middle aged housewife in her 40s.

The mother makes some inaudible long joke before the punchline. He exaggeratedly slams on the black metal table, hard enough to make it shake. He talks to the mother while making eye contact with the girl.

Hey, if it's old enough to bleed.

The man winks.

*Do you think this Wednesday would work?
We'll need a few extra hours this summer.*

*I think she just wants to relax with me until she
leaves in the Fall.*

It's okay. I'd be happy to help.

The man and the girl sit in his truck. Older model with miniature seats facing each other, compacted in the back. Roll-down windows. Polyester rubs against her back, broken air conditioning with the windows up. He drives while she stares down at her knees.

*So, what are you up to?
Do you have a boyfriend this year?*

*No, I don't have a boyfriend. I don't think boys
really like me, but that's okay.*

*Sorry kid, that's sad. Why don't you talk to me
about it? Let me pull over.*

He drives down a couple blocks, and pulls into an abandoned corporate car park.

*It must be pretty hard being a girl your age, and
being so lonely. All those hormones rushing
around. Your generation has changed a lot. I
remember when I was your age, I'd spend all day
with my girlfriend. She looked a little like you. We'd
have a little fun in the car her father bought her for*

her birthday. Kids these days just don't get a lot of chances to make a real connection. I'm sure you have a lot of frustration.

Yeah, it's hard.

I mean, I know you're old enough to ask, but what do young people do these days to relieve it? What kind of porn do you watch?

No, I've never really seen it before.

Never seen it? Well then, what do you like to think about when you, you know.

He makes a jerk-off motion, they laugh together.
She blushes and pulls a strand of her hair back.

I don't know, I'm not sure if I've ever tried.. This is silly, but I used to have a little crush on you. Sometimes when I fall asleep, I think about when I was really little, when you came over to our house, I'd sit on your lap while you watched football with my dad, and you'd...

We see his hand reaching down from the front seat.

Close up on her face. Her mouth opens, distorting wide, unable to tell if she's in agony or pleasure.
Nothing comes out.

Cut.

The Director, no more than 23. Skinny kid with bad skin and rimless glasses, wearing a drenched polo and sweatbands covering old scars. Long brown hair. Pathetic. Pulls the chair out beside the monitor, and motions to offer it to her.

She coughs and her face goes back to normal. She looks pissed. She takes a robe from the PA. He leans in to whisper to her.

I would have thought you got it after the first few dozen times I screamed my lungs out, but yes, I'll try scared. *You did great. We're just going to try that last part again, alright? Open up a few centimeters wider, and look in the direction of the light until your eyes get tired. This time try to make it a little louder, try to make her look a little scared. Get more intense with it.*

Look, just think about it. I'm sure as a woman you can understand. It's her first time. She's never fucked before, and she's nervous. Inexperienced. She's being adventurous by letting this old guy finger her around. He's breaking her hymen up, and she's feeling something she's never felt before. The feeling of true freedom. Pain.

This is the first stage of her personal and sexual awakening, it sets the scene for when she comes back to stab him in the mansion, before the ending.

I'll see if I can muster up the feeling to kill someone.

She moves back into place,
opens her mouth to a yawn.
Pauses to collect herself. A finger shoves inside.
She screams louder than any other take.

The Actor shakes the lock getting into the trailer. He
looks younger with the grey washed out. Tan linen
button down, gold chain. He shoves the door open.
It's pitch black inside.

The Actress stands at the far end, eyes reflecting
the light from the microwave. legs bent like an
injured doe to show him where she's been.
reflecting wet thighs as he grabs his hard cock
through his khakis, crouching down as he moves
towards her.

Please, don't

Holds her head back like he's stunning an animal.
his stomach compresses her against the tile floor.
He slips himself inside, pounding her tight little ass
as she squirms underneath him.

I love you, my little girl.

Feel his stomach rising with each
breath, skin to skin
shaking as he bangs her body into the floor
fingers in her mouth, muffled
she turns static

Oh my fucking god I love your cock.

Cut to her cradled in his chest on the leather built-in couch. Watching the city loop on the television.

How was he this time?

The window situation is over. Kind of cute, like a panting dog. It's easier to just let him do it.

This is our fourth?

Fifth.

Your first starring.

Maybe my last.

I love him, but he acts like a child.

He still is one, mostly.

You sure you want to stay this time?

I want to be seen.

Retirement isn't always a choice.

Eyes stare white on the weather. Legs crossed sitting on the cheap blue printed motel quilt without underwear. Holed out oversized walmart t-shirt, chopped wig. She holds a greased bag before the lights heat up the morning, fingers rubbed on shirt. Hash browns and egg sandwiches. Sound of cops running around outside the blackout windows, near the grey Mazda with the marks on the passenger door.

The Man stands close to grab her head, pressing her face against the hard seam in his pants. He turns to unzip them, and we hear a gagging sound, her face obscured aside from her watering - or crying - eyes.

The Girl gives him a pleading look.

It depends on if you play your role or not. If you don't learn how to work for fifteen minutes, you'll live a life that's all work. Smile a little more, and I'll make sure you're always taken care of.

His pelvis covers her face. The man curses as he grabs her head. He pulls away, and we see the aftermath of her face. In pain. Degraded. Dripping. Tears streaming down her face, the kind of dirt you can't scrub out. The look of someone waiting to disconnect.

Don't you find it a little unrealistic?

What do you mean?

No one's paying for this kind of lifespan. I'm not the same guy, am I?

No. They're different men in her life, but more a representation of what those people occupy in her mind. They're all permanent, all one. Just like she's playing herself at any age. When you look at her, you're seeing her across time.

I don't even have any lines in this.

See, this is when she becomes mute, she locks herself in the bathroom to hang herself from the ceiling fan after giving head to her boyfriend who whores her out to decrepit old men he finds online.

What is it worth if I don't have anything to say?

The Director lifts The Actress by her chin, wiping
her mouth blood white with his thumb.

Show me your eyes.

Wet transfers shaking hands. Urgent with tears.
She meets him with something that can only
happen once.

He checks the camera.
*Can you do that again,
exactly the same as last time?*

The set without people becomes a museum. You
look around, and know exactly where you stand.

*You're beautiful. Up close, the way your hair
reflects the light. Soft yellow red. Your lips, your
cheeks, so.*

The Director masturbates inches away from her
thigh, panting in whisper.

Can you fucking help me out with this one?
He grabs her wrist, forcing her palm on him.
She slaps him. He comes on her hand.

*Spoiled brat.
Did you fuck him?
Yes.
Do you fuck everyone?
No.
Why won't you fuck me?*

*Because.
I love you.*

*I'm grateful to work with you.
Everyone gets fucked with, or makes it happen.
When I reached 28, I made a choice.
You're lucky he still keeps you around.
We both are.*

You have to get hard again.
Pulls hard on his limp cock with her hand covered
in his cum, squirming until he makes it halfway
there. She crawls down to the corner of the room to
spread wide.

Rubbing rose tinted, flushed red and purple skin
between his fingertips. Compresses the base of his
cock to barely force it in. Kissing breasts and
collarbones. He makes awkward, weak thrusts for a
few minutes in near silence.

Her face turned away, motionless, staring out into
space like a doll.

*How many times has he done it to you?
We've been together since the day we met.
How old was I?
Eleven.
I've loved you since I met you.
No, you haven't.*

He makes soft arrhythmic motions between grunts,
staring at her profile.

*Have you ever touched a woman before?
I want to be gentle with you.*

Grabs by the base of his neck, knocking flatline.
Legs consume him, struggling for breath as she
grinds against his body while he's deep inside.

*I finish hard, fast, and often. Don't be afraid to
pound my cervix. Make me scream so hard
that it rings forever.*

You're hurting me.

Grasping voice as she clasps harder around his
throat. He comes instantly inside her.

Face buried in her breasts, wrapped around her
waist. Hyperventilating as he sobs into skin.
Grabbing onto fistfuls to pull him out, like a scared
kid begging to be picked up when
they're too tired to walk.

Thank you.

She stares at the overhead grid of the black
container. In the morning, before the crew starts
arriving, the changes are made.

A piece of pale warm white wrapped in organza, a
swan in newspapers with a broken neck. Crushed
miniature cups across the ground
to aid in the process.

Face down on a blue tarp over concrete, seeping
through an open rock. Pair of pants on the floor
covered in dried semen and blood. A man's soaked
wristbands float above the closet.

Men hang around to take a shot in the dark, until
someone says the picture is clear.

The gaffers turn on the day again.
The cameras roll.

I always loved you.